

# **Major Accomplishments**

**City of High Point, North Carolina  
2009 - 2010**

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

### **Quicker Development Plan Review**

Engineering Services staff completed the stream identification and Best Management Practices certification courses through the N. C. Division of Water Quality. This allows the City to review plans for the development community without their having to be submitted to DWQ--eliminating or greatly reducing the review time required for private development plans. (2008)

### **Online/Automated Utility Services**

Customers can sign up for eBill, monthly electronic notification about viewing statements and paying bills online. Informational inserts, which accompany printed bills are also posted online.

A “one-stop shopping” experience is being provided by continuing to add features that allow customers to make a payment or request a city service through the automated phone system or the City’s website. Over the past year, utility bill payments made by phone have increased 25% to 33,042; payments made online have increased by almost 20% to 49,618. Calls handled by the automated phone system have increased by over 30% to 61,921, and online requests for service have increased by 40% to 1,933.

### **Customer Contact**

Customers may also call the Customer Service Center or visit the office for their one-stop shopping experience. Calls answered by Customer Service Representatives have increased by almost 30% to 335,286 with a call abandonment rate of only 5%-- a reduction from 6% the previous year. The number of walk-in customers assisted has also increased by 43% from 26,026 to 37,311.

### **Field Services**

Field Services continue to provide same day utility service for move-in and move-out requests with the same day cut-on rate of 99.8%.

### **Home Energy Audits**

City inspectors performed 315 free home energy audits at the request of homeowners in 2009. Through November 30, 2010, 534 audits have been performed. After the approximately one-hour audit was completed, a written report identifying ways to conserve energy and providing recommendations on how to correct any deficiencies was mailed to the homeowners.

### **Citizen University**

The webpage, (<http://www.highpointnc.gov/plan/citizen/cfm>) called Citizen University, was designed to convey planning and development concepts in easy-to-understand language and an inviting format. It provides documents that are designed as introductory undergraduate “courses” and more advanced graduate “courses.” The webpage was made available to the public in September 2009.

### **Reserve Theatre Tickets & More**

The High Point Theatre Box Office implemented a one-stop shop for theatre tickets and hotel reservations for its patrons in 2010. Currently, two area hotels and inns are participating in this program where room reservations are made through the box office at the time tickets are purchased. Plans for 2011 include expanding this service to include dinner reservations at area restaurants. Also, booking software allows potential renters to review available dates on the Theatre’s website to plan an event.

## **GIS**

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A web-based mapping service was developed to allow for consistent communication of data between citizens and staff.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **High Point's MSA ranks in Top 10 (three years in a row)**

In March 2009, Site Selection magazine announced that the Greensboro / High Point Metropolitan Statistical Area – composed of Guilford, Randolph, and Rockingham counties – ranked 7th in the nation in attracting new industry. That ranking was for all MSA's in the United States with a population between 200,000 and 1,000,000. For the preceding two years, the region ranked first. Each of those years, High Point led the way – having 30% of the qualifying projects although the city has only 14% of the population and a small part of the region's geography.

#### **Small Business Loan Pool**

The City received a federal loan of \$3.9 million to establish a small business loan pool to promote investment in the Core City. This loan pool will lead to the creation or retention of jobs for people with low-to-moderate incomes. With nearly \$5.8 million in private funds leveraged from local banks, the pool's total is \$9.7 million.

### **EFFICIENCY/EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES**

#### **Budget Development Software**

The City implemented the Fletcher & Fletcher budget development software package to allow for better budget analysis and reporting on organizational performance.

#### **Credit/Collections**

The City has a 99.7% collection rate for bills up to three years old. The City also participates in the 5 Star Collection program, a State-sponsored program that withholds state tax refunds from individuals to offset bills owed to governments. High Point is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the state for its collections under the 5 Star program and collected \$243,860 in FY 08/09 and \$263,873 in FY 09/10.

#### **New Meter-Reading Technology**

A program is in effect to change out residential water meters that have been in use 10 years or more to new radio read technology. In the past two years, 2,404 meters have been changed out.

#### **GovDeals**

The Fleet Services Dept. began using this online auction service to dispose of vehicles and equipment in 2008. In the past, equipment was sold during a traditional onsite auction. The department would spend weeks preparing for the annual auction by charging batteries, replacing tires, etc. Revenue using this method averaged \$175,000-\$200,000 annually.

GovDeals allows agencies to dispose of property immediately as it is declared surplus, reducing storage and depreciation costs. Potential buyers can be reached in every state and in 26 foreign countries. Revenue has increased to an average of more than \$500,000 annually.

#### **Time & Attendance Software**

Occurrence Tracking for the Public Services Environmental Services Division tracks tardies and sick absences, eliminating the time-consuming manual tracking method. The software generates e-mail notifications to division supervisors at the time of an absence or late report to work, allowing immediate intervention and/or discipline from the employee's supervisor, if indicated. It also

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provides an electronic record of absences for use in rating an employee's attendance and punctuality on their performance evaluation, as well as a record to determine the employee's eligibility for a Safety and Attendance bonus.

### **Online Training**

In 2010, the City implemented an on-line training program to successfully deliver and track municipal government employee training. In its first year, the City offered a total of fifty-two courses including supervisor and safety training courses for approximately 400 supervisors and 450 non-supervisory employees. Education plans were developed based on essential job tasks and required OSHA training based upon workplace exposure to safety hazards.

Employees' progress is tracked and reported to department directors. One of the benefits of such a program is the ability to show that individual employees have completed courses and the grade that they received on the course final test. New courses will be added to the training program in 2011 based on feedback from participating employees and the needs of the organization.

### **Information Technology Development**

An internal written system was developed and implemented to allow customer e-mail notification in the utilities system and for inventory analysis for fleet, phones and radios.

### **Information Technology Security**

Several system enhancements have been made to improve the security and safety of city computers, reducing spam, preventing malicious e-mails and websites, protecting sensitive public safety and credit card information, allowing for Voice over IP telephone service to reduce costs, and encryption services and protection of web servers from application attacks.

### **Bid-to-Goal Projects**

The Bid-to-Goal program has 84 Public Services employees participating and has eliminated 16 full time positions. The program is designed to create more awareness in spending and provide performance management tools for Public Services Management. The savings indicated for the life of this program are \$14,398,710.

### **Solid Waste Collections (Automation)**

In 2009-2010, Environmental Services changed the collection services from semi-automated to automated for garbage and recycling. This major change reduced staff by 24 positions and reduced the number of collection routes. The program change involved the distribution of 95-gallon roll-out carts to 34,000 locations for recycling collection which was further modified from weekly collection to bi-weekly collection.

### **Radio Shop Controls Costs, Cooperates**

Contractual services with both Archdale and Asheboro Police Divisions have been established to maintain those cities' public safety radios, which helps control city shop-related expenses. An agreement has also been reached with the N.C. State Highway Patrol's VIPER communications network to co-locate on the City's existing southeast tower site to provide statewide communications to the City of High Point's public safety workers.

### **Redesign of the City's Website**

In 2009, the City began a project to redesign the City's website to a more user-friendly, menu-driven and task-oriented site that incorporates social media technologies such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. The new website went live in November 2010.

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## **Desktop Virtualization**

The City is currently installing Citrix technology in an effort to reduce desktop replacement costs (about \$400,000 annually when fully implemented) and to provide a simple, secure means of remote computing. This “green” technology uses less energy and has less of an impact on the environment as the life expectancy of a thin client is much greater than that of a PC or laptop.

## **FINANCIAL STABILITY**

### **Bond Ratings**

Over the past two years, the City’s ratings from the three major bond rating agencies have been adjusted or upgraded for both general obligation and water and sewer utility debt. High Point’s ratings for GO debt are Standard & Poor’s AAA, Moody’s Aa1 and Fitch AA1. Ratings for utility debt are S&P AA+, Fitch AA1 and Moody’s Aa2.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES**

### **Intersection improvements:**

- Courtesy and Prospect 2009
- Washington at Hoskins 2009
- Willard Dairy at Eastchester 2009
- Piedmont Parkway at Eastchester 2009
- Gordon at Cedrow 2010

### **Roadway improvements:**

- Kivett Drive Gateway 2009
- North Pendleton Street extension 2009
- Old Winston Road (began 2010)
- Oakview Road 2010
- Deep River Road 2010
- Burton Road 2010

### **Water lines:**

- Deep River Road extension 2010
- Harvey Road 2010
- Oakview Road 2010
- Tarrant Road 2010
- Willard Road 2010
- Old Winston Road (began construction 2010)

### **1 MG Water Tank & Booster Pump Station**

Constructed a one-million gallon elevated tank and booster pump station in preparation for the receipt of water from the Randleman reservoir at a cost of \$3,383,028.

### **Water Transmission Line from PTRWA (Phase 1)**

A seven-mile finished water transmission line from Coltrane Mill pump station to the existing High Point water system was constructed, tying in at Riverdale Road at a cost of \$6,828,385. This line includes 3 segments of line beneath the lake.

### **Wastewater lines:**

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- West Lexington Outfall 2009
- Creekside Outfall 2010
- Downtown cluster improvements 2010

## **Rotary and Kensington Stormwater Improvements**

Stormwater improvements were completed to minimize flooding potential in the Rotary/Farriss area and Kensington south of Country Club Dr. at a cost of \$1,401,329.

## **Westside Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade**

Phase 1 preliminary treatment facility was completed at the Westside Plant including odor control components at a cost of \$24,023,440. Construction is currently underway on Phase 2 which includes filter replacement, UV disinfection, and the effluent pump station.

## **Railroad crossings (completed):**

- Prospect Street 2010
- Grimes Avenue 2010

## **Railroad crossings (began construction 2010):**

- Taylor Avenue
- Ward Avenue Underpass

## **Hartley Drive Extension**

Design and permit work completed 2010

## **NEIGHBORHOODS**

### **Neighborhood Stabilization Program**

As of Sept. 30, 2010, the City used part of a \$2.6 million federal grant to provide down-payment assistance to 10 NSP-eligible first-time homebuyers who bought foreclosed property, rehabilitated seven foreclosed properties purchased by NSP-eligible first-time homebuyers, and bought four blighted and vacant properties for future redevelopment.

### **Local Code Enforcement**

In 2009, there was a significant increase in the number of public nuisance and minimum housing code violations processed. The deteriorating conditions in many neighborhoods as a result of the current economic downturn made enforcement a priority identified by the City Council. There were 3,629 public nuisance inspections completed by inspectors resulting in the highest number of violations issued in the past five years (2,254). Also, this increased focus is reflected in the highest number of minimum housing violations in the past five years (327).

### **Lead Hazard Removal Project**

In 2008, the City was awarded a \$3 million federal grant to carry out a lead-based paint remediation program on private residential housing serving families with low to very-low-incomes.

The primary objective of the program is to reduce the risk of lead-based paint poisoning in targeted core-city neighborhoods by 1) conducting lead hazard control activities in 229 residential housing units, 2) promoting increased blood lead level screening of children under six, 3) educating the public (including bilingual translations for non-English speaking persons) about the dangers of lead poisoning and explaining how owners can protect occupants, 4) training and certifying building owners and contractors and their employees on how to conduct lead safe work practices, 5)

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funding an Environmental Health Specialist position in the Guilford County Dept. of Public Health to focus exclusively on High Point, and 6) creating a *Lead Safe High Point* web site, which includes a lead safe housing registry. As of September 30, 2010

- 129 residential housing units were remediated and
- 56 children younger than six now have lead free home environments.

### **University Area Plan**

The purpose of the plan, adopted by City Council on Dec. 7, 2009, is to guide the orderly growth of the area, so that the university grows in a planned and identified, phased approach in conjunction with the community, while maintaining the stability of adjacent residential areas and while enhancing the commercial uses within the area to provide needed services within walking distance of the surrounding residences and university students.

### **Washington Drive District Plan**

The purpose of the Washington Drive District Plan, adopted by City Council in December 2008, is to physically and economically revitalize the historic commercial district and to stabilize and revitalize the surrounding neighborhood.

### **The City Project**

The City Project group has created a Facebook page and website, produced informational materials and submitted a grant to the U.S. Dept. of Transportation for a N. Main transportation and livability study (\$480,000) with a \$120,000 cost share commitment from the City if the grant is awarded. Also, a grant to EPA for brownfield assessment (\$400,000) has been prepared. The City Project is working with a local artist to create murals in the Showroom District and in Uptowne, and started efforts to create a High Point montage on Main Street.

### **Uptowne**

Banners have been placed in the area. "Uptowne High Point" was formed and successfully advocated for a city ordinance amendment to allow A-frame signage and outdoor dining. Uptowne property owners contributed \$1,500 to fund the architectural renderings of the Uptowne vision created by Peter Freeman (<http://www.freemankennett.com/Uptown.html>).

A successful Uptowne Summer sidewalk Stroll was held in August 2010 and the second annual Ilderton Beach Blast was held in Sept. A commitment of \$35,000 from NCDOT to do streetscaping and landscaping along a stretch of North Main has been received pending the raising of matching funds. Richard Wood will be chairing a committee to look at recruiting businesses to Uptowne – with help from the Guilford Merchants Association.

### **Washington Street**

Shovel-ready engineering drawings for the Washington St. streetscape have been prepared. High Point Community Against Violence is involved in the area. The Hayden-Harmon Foundation purchased 613 and 710 E. Washington St. Progress is underway for the Washington Street District to be included on the Historic Register, and plans are underway to establish a City Project presence on Washington St.

### **South Main/GTCC**

The City Project has collaborated with a High Point University Strategic Communications class to develop a name and a theme for the area. Collaboration is ongoing with GTCC to create a survey of

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what kind of businesses people want to see in their neighborhood. A South Main/GTCC group is meeting under the chairmanship of Tim Ilderton.

## **NEW/UPGRADED CITY FACILITIES**

- Hi-Tran facility expansion 2009
- Police Firing Range improvements 2009
- Allen Jay Walking Trail and Parking Lot Improvements 2010
- Allen Jay Recreation Center
- Deep River Recreation Center
- Fire Station #3 relocation
- Fire Station #4 relocation
- High Point Public Library addition/renovation
- Police Range Classroom design
- Fire Maintenance & Logistics Center construction contract awarded
- Parks & Recreation administration building retro-fit
- O. H. Leak Law Enforcement Center roof repaired and HVAC system replacement underway
- Municipal Operations Center roof and HVAC system replacement underway

### **Miracle League Field**

Dedicated in Sept. 2009, the Miracle League has played three seasons (Fall 2009, Spring 2010 and Fall 2010. Participation has increased from 47 to 98 individuals and from four teams the first season to 10 teams during Fall 2010 season.

### **Kersey Valley Landfill Phase 4**

Construction is wrapping up for Kersey Valley Landfill Phase 4 and should be ready to receive municipal solid waste by the end of 2010. This phase is projected to last approximately 5 years and cost \$5,377,752.

## **Individual Awards**

### **2010 APWA Top 10**

Chris Thompson received an award from APWA National and was recognized for being a 2010 Top 10 Public Works Leader.

### **2010 AWWA Operator of the Year**

Wendell Pickett received the 2010 Water Operator of the year award from NC AWWA and has been recognized for outstanding proficiency in plant operations and service to the association.

### **2010 APWA-NC *H.W. Keuffner Award***

Kathy Blake named recipient of the 2010 APWA-NC *H.W. Keuffner Award* for Local Government Service Excellence

### **2010 APWA-NC *President's Award***

Keith Pugh named recipient of the 2010 APWA-NC *President's Award* for Outstanding Service Contributing to the Success of the North Carolina Chapter

### **2009 AWWA Golden Manhole Award**

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Bart Hepler received the Golden Manhole award from the NC AWWA/WEA for his outstanding work in the field of wastewater collection systems.

## **2009 Robert S. Hopson Award APWA-NC**

Terry Mitchell received the Robert S Hopson award from the NC Chapter of APWA. He was recognized for his dedication as a public servant and his "can do attitude" in assisting customers.

## **2009 North Carolina Triad Nurses Association of Occupational Health Nurses**

Jill Simons, Occupational Health Nurse, has been elected President of the North Carolina Triad Nurses Association of Occupational Health Nurses for the years 2009-2013.

## **2008 HW Kueffner Award APWA-NC**

Ray Davis received the HW Kueffner Award from the NC Chapter of APWA. He was recognized for his outstanding public service to citizens of the city of High Point.

## **Safety Professional of the Year**

Debbie Meurs, Safety & Health Director, was recognized as the Safety Professional of the Year by the American Society of Safety Engineers. The Triad chapter has over 1100 members and this is the first time this award has been given to a Triad member in 15 years.

## **Facilitator, Special Olympics Global Athletes Congress**

Sherry Paul, City recreation supervisor, was honored to be one of the eight facilitators selected to serve at the 2010 Special Olympics Global Athletes Congress in Marrakesh, Morocco, in June. Sherry was also recognized by the Arc of High Point as the Professional of the Year.

## **Head Coach, N. C. Aquatics Team**

Parks and Recreation employee Stephanie Hedgecock was selected as the head coach for the NC Aquatics Team for the 2010 Special Olympics USA National Games in Lincoln, Nebraska, in July 2010.

## **State Youth Advisory Council appointee**

Recreation Supervisor Richard Shore has been appointed for a two-year term to the Governor's North Carolina State Youth Advisory Council.

## **Law Enforcement Professional**

Park Ranger Greg Warren was presented with an award from the North Carolina Attorney General's Law Enforcement Professional Certificate Program in Feb. 2010. The Advanced Certificate is the pinnacle of a law officer's career.

## **Gang Investigators Special Achievement Award**

In Aug. 2010, Park Ranger Greg Warren and High Point Police Officer Parker Howey, IV, earned a Special Achievement Award from the N. C. Gang Investigators Association (NCGIA) across the Carolinas for their work on a gang crime investigation that occurred at West End Park in June 2009.

## **Governor's Award for Volunteer Service**

Gretta Bush, senior recreation center director at Southside Recreation Center, was honored in Oct. 2010 with the Governor's Award for Volunteer Service. Gretta has served as a member of the High Point Community Against Violence for 10 years. She is currently the President of the organization.

## **PGA Presidents Circle Award**



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Golf Director Steve High received the PGA Presidents Circle Award in 2010 for in recognition for growing the game of golf.

## **Organization Awards**

### **Presented by ElectriCities of North Carolina, Inc.**

Public Power Awards of Excellence for: Customer Service, Energy Efficiency, Economic Development and for Communications

### **Blue Seal of Excellence**

The Fleet Services Dept. has just recently qualified for Blue Seal of Excellence Recognition as prescribed by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE), a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of vehicle repair and service by means of voluntary testing and certification for automotive repair and service professionals. ASE Blue Seal of Excellence Recognition identifies establishments with a high percentage of certified professionals and a certified professional in each area of service offered.

### **Cultural Diversity Award**

The Human Relations Dept. received the National League of Cities Cultural Diversity Award for the High Point Student Human Relations Commission program.

### **Top 10 Digital City**

The City of High Point was recognized during the National League of Cities Congress of Cities in Denver as a Top 10 digital city in its population category for 2010.

### **Innovative Program Award**

The High Point Parks & Recreation Dept.'s Miracle League program received the statewide award at the N. C. Recreation & Parks Association's annual conference in November 2010.

### **Healthy Worksite Award**

In January 2009, the City of High Point received the Get Healthy Guilford Coalition "Healthy Worksite Award" in recognition of its commitment to reducing and preventing obesity and obesity-related illnesses from the Get Healthy Guilford Coalition through our wellness programs, particularly the Weight Watchers sessions.

### **High Point EDC earns award for annual report (nine years in a row)**

In August 2010, the annual report of the High Point Economic Development Corp. won a major award. It was the ninth year in a row that a High Point EDC annual report won an award from the International Economic Development Council, the Southern Economic Development Council, or both.

### **ElectriCities gives High Point award of excellence (three years in a row)**

In 2010, 2009, and 2008, ElectriCities recognized the City of High Point with its "Public Power Award of Excellence" for economic development successes. The award recognizes initiative by the city in economic development efforts, including industry recruitment leading to job creation. High Point is a member of ElectriCities, North Carolina's \$1.2 billion public power service corporation serving 500,000 retail customers in 51 communities across North Carolina.

### **High Point wins national "warehouse / distribution" award (two years in a row)**

High Point was selected as one of five national recipients of Expansion Solutions Magazine's 2009 Awards of Excellence – in the warehouse / distribution category. The award recognizes areas that

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have “made exceptional progress in economic development by successfully recruiting, retaining, and growing businesses” in that industry sector. High Point won the same award in 2008.

## **Community Partnerships, Intelligence and Focused Deterrence Reduce Violent Crime**

The High Point Police Department (HPPD) has been nationally recognized for success with its community policing model for reducing gun violence, drug violence and gang violence. The HPPD was twice a finalist for the Herman Goldstein Award (2000 & 2006), received the Innovations in American Government Award from the Ashe Institute at Harvard (2007) and a National League of Cities Gold Award (2008). The approach is a multi-dimensional, partnership based, focused deterrent strategy that identifies and targets violent behavior. Results include lower violent crime, increased community trust, fewer citizen complaints, fewer arrests, and reduced recidivism.

## **Washington Drive District Plan**

The Planning & Development Dept. received a planning award for this plan from the North Carolina chapter of the American Planning Association in 2009.

## **Special Olympics North Carolina Host**

Since 2005, the City has hosted the state-level fall games. Competition is held in cycling, soccer, tennis, and roller skating for approximately 900 athletes.